**WAC 197-11-960 Environmental checklist.**

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

*Purpose of checklist:*

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW, requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared for all proposals with probable significant adverse impacts on the quality of the environment. The purpose of this checklist is to provide information to help you and the agency identify impacts from your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an EIS is required.

*Instructions for applicants:*

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Governmental agencies use this checklist to determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant, requiring preparation of an EIS. Answer the questions briefly, with the most precise information known, or give the best description you can.

You must answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. In most cases, you should be able to answer the questions from your own observations or project plans without the need to hire experts. If you really do not know the answer, or if a question does not apply to your proposal, write "do not know" or "does not apply." Complete answers to the questions now may avoid unnecessary delays later.

Some questions ask about governmental regulations, such as zoning, shoreline, and landmark designations. Answer these questions if you can. If you have problems, the governmental agencies can assist you.

The checklist questions apply to all parts of your proposal, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

*Use of checklist for nonproject proposals:*

Complete this checklist for nonproject proposals, even though questions may be answered "does not apply." IN ADDITION, complete the SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS (part D).

For nonproject actions, the references in the checklist to the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proposer," and "affected geographic area," respectively.

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

**Hyer Irrigation Project 12-076206**

2. Name of applicant**: Department of Natural Resources**

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Contact Person**: Brett Tonne** Phone**: (509) 754-3834**

**DNR Southeast Region**
**713 Bowers Road**
**Ellensburg, WA 98926**

4. Date checklist prepared: **July 19, 2004**
5. Agency requesting checklist: **Department of Natural Resources**
6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

**The applicant has proposed development by winter of 2004.**

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain. **No.**

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal. **None Known.**

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain. **None known.**

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known. No new permits are necessary for this project. **The Washington State Department of Natural Resources has a water permit from the Washington State Department of Ecology that includes the project area. Irrigated agriculture is allowed in this area under the current county zoning rules.**

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

**The DNR is proposing to convert an additional 50 acres from existing grass vegetation to irrigated row crops. Presently, 232 acres out of 480 total acres are farmed as irrigated/dryland crop production. The land proposed for development had been farmed at one time; last known photo dated June 27, 1961. The land is proposed for development in the fall of 2004 so a cover crop can be planted over the winter. The development would result in the expansion of an already existing irrigation system owned and operated by Hyer Farms. The DNR has an existing water permit for its land within this project, along with seasonal transfer from Hyer, which they use to compensate for our permit. The proposed crops to be grown are alfalfa, cereal grains, corn, dry beans & peas, onions, sugar beets, and potatoes. As a condition to development, we will require the lessee to follow a resource management plan that will require the lessee to implement practices to assure land meets ecosystem standards for state owned agricultural lands.**

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

**NE1/2, SE1/4 , Section 36, Township 19 North, Range 30 East. Approximately 15 miles east of Moses Lake on the north side of Interstate 90. Plan of development will be in the SE1/4 only, as other ground is already used as irrigated/dryland agriculture. Only 50 acres are proposed to be developed.**

**Please refer to the attached map for the locations of the lease area.**

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. **Earth**

a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, **rolling**, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other . . . . . .

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? **15% on the proposed site of development**

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

**Section 36, Township 19 North, Range 30 East:**

**Warden Silt Loam (0-15% slope), Kennewick Silt Loam (10-25%), Prosser Very Fine Sandy Loam (2-5%), Prosser Very Fine Sandy Loam (15-20%)**

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. **None known.**

e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill. **Minimal amount of leveling will be required within the circle irrigation system. It will be required that the irrigation system is in place before any leveling occurs for the purpose of controlling any soil and wind erosion.**

f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe. **Some wind erosion could occur during installation and establishment of the circle irrigation system.**

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings**)? The only "semi-impervious" surface may be a graveled road on the east border of the section, clear of irrigation system. No buildings will be allowed or built on the site.**

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any: **The applicant will be required to design a soil erosion plan through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that meets the soil loss tolerance for soil found on site. Applicant has already worked with NRCS to plan development for this project. NRCS has designated this land as "not highly erodible land" or NHEL. Lessee will be using organic manure for fertilizer, which will also help to build organic matter in the soil. The soil tolerance is the rate at which a soil rebuilds itself over time. Erosion will be managed to maintain soil productivity indefinitely.**

**2. Air**

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile,odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known. **Dust from wind erosion may be present during development and land grading of the soils. Constructing the irrigation system prior to any land grading should help alleviate the problem by being able to apply water prior to any grading. A soil erosion plan designed by the NRCS will help to minimize blowing dust during windstorm events. Farm equipment exhaust will be created during the farming season (March through October) each year.**

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe**. Livestock manure may be used as a fertilizer each year as the source of nitrogen for the crop (organic). Level will not be high enough to cause any sort of disturbance, as there is only one residential home west of the proposed site of development.**

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any: **Soil erosion plan from the NRCS should help reduce any blowing dust. Livestock manure will be disked into soil after application, which will help minimize any odor. Constructing irrigation system prior to any land grading should help alleviate any the problem.**

3. **Water**

a. Surface:

**1)** Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into. **No.**

2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans. **No.**

3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material. **None.**

4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. **No.**

5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.
**No.**

6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge. **No.**

b. Ground:

**1)** Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known. **Yes. Irrigation water will be withdrawn from a well on DNR land. Irrigation water will be used to prepare for and grow row crops from April through October of each year.**

**Subject to the rights of the holder of Department of Ecology No. G3-00299C, filed on March 20, 1964. Allows for 82 acres of water use each year.**

**Lessee also uses a seasonal transfer from his own water source under Ground Water Certificate No. G3-21031C.**

2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals. . . ; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

**None**

c. Water runoff (including stormwater):

1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.
**Most runoff occurs from snowmelt. This area receives about 9 inches of annual precipitation. Irrigation water runoff will be kept to a minimum due to the efficiency of the circle irrigation system's technology used to grow row crops. Any storm water or irrigation runoff can collect on the north side of proposed site of development in a field border consisting of existing vegetation.**

2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe. **The irrigation circle system is designed to apply water to the crops at the same rate the plants readily use the water. Since there is no surface water in close proximity, chances are very low. Any runoff would collect in the field borders and then would be filtered out in the root system of the perennial grasses and soil profile. Lessee proposes to grow "organic" crops on the land, so no chemicals or fertilizers will be run through the irrigation system, which greatly reduces any chance of surface or ground water contamination.**

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any: **The applicant will be required to use a water schedule for crops to monitor the soil moisture and rate of water uptake by the crop. This will reduce the chance of surface water runoff. The applicant will maintain a buffer of existing vegetation along crop borders. Any runoff can collect in the vegetative field borders to help minimize any impacts that may occur.**

4. **Plants**

a. Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site:

_____ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other

_____ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other

X_____ shrubs**: sagebrush, grey rabbitbrush**

X_____ grass**: predominate: crested wheatgrass, Sherman big bluegrass, cheatgrass**
**traces of: Sandberg bluegrass, basin wildrye, bottlebrush, squirreltail**

_____ pasture

X_____crop or grain: **proposed site of development had been used for cereal grain production prior to 1961.**
***Not sure on exact date of last farm use.**

_____ wet soil plants:

_____ water plants:

X_____ other types of vegetation: **native forbs: yarrow, lupin, fleabane**
**weeds: prickly lettuce, fiddleneck tarweed**

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered? **Existing vegetation will be removed and replaced with row crops under circle irrigation on approximately 50 acres**.

c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site. **None listed on TRAX**.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any: **The existing native shrub steppe vegetation is outside of the circle perimeter and will not be disturbed. Some of the land previously seeded to non-native grasses is also outside of the circle perimeter and will be maintained for wildlife habitat.**

5. **Animals**

a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

birds: **hawks, song birds, sparrows, meadow larks**
mammals: **deer, coyotes, field mice**

fish: **None**

b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site. **None listed on TRAX**.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain. **No.**

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any: **All circle corners and non-irrigated areas will be maintained as existing vegetation. Wildlife will also feed on parts of crops grown and on any other organisms that may be food sources.**

6. **Energy and natural resources**

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc**. Electricity will be used as a power source to operate the circle irrigation system. Gasoline and diesel will be used to power farm equipment and other vehicles.**

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe. **No.**

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any: **The irrigation system will be low pressure, high efficiency units for water and electricity conservation.**

7. **Environmental health**

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe. **Farm chemicals may be used at some point during the farming operations. Since the applicant proposes growing "organic" crops, chemicals will not be used unless a "non-organic" crop is grown. Should chemicals be used in the farming operation, operator will be required to follow all rules established by state, local, federal laws; and label instructions that are related to the handling, application, storage, use and disposal of such chemicals.**

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required. **None Known**.

2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any: **All work done on the site will be accomplished according to required permits and environmental regulations required by the State of Washington, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Ecology. The applicant will be required to develop a soil conservation plan through the Grant County NRCS to help control soil erosion caused by wind, which can cause health hazards. The applicant will also be required to follow a Resource Management Plan (RMP) that enforces wind erosion control, fertilizer, pesticide, and other chemical management.**

b. **Noise**

1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)? **None**

2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site. **Noise could occur up to 24 hours a day depending on farming operations**. **Normal farm machinery and equipment noise will be created during planting, growing, and harvest of the crop. The irrigation circles also create some noise, but at a level that is hard to recognize. Overall noise from this project would be very small. The highest noise level may occur during harvest due to additional numbers of vehicles and machinery. Noise would not create a problem as all surrounding land is in circle irrigation**.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any: **None needed.**

8. **Land and shoreline use**

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? **Irrigated row crop agriculture**.

b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe. **Section 36, Township 19 North, Range 30 East has historically been used as irrigated and dryland crop production. The proposed site of development in the SE1/4 of this section was farmed as dryland crop production up until 1961(last known photo proof).**

c. Describe any structures on the site**. None**

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what? **No.**

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site? **Agriculture**

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site? **Agriculture**

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site? **None.**

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify. **No.**

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project? **No one will reside on this property. There may be up to 8 people or more, depending on crop being produced.**

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace? **None.**

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any: **None.**

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any: **The proposed site of development meets the land use designated by the Grant County Planning Department. Land use beyond authorized irrigated agriculture would not be allowed without review and written approval from the DNR. Requirements for existing and proposed land use plans will be monitored and enforced.**

9. **Housing**

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. **None.**

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. **None.**

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any: **None.**

10. **Aesthetics**

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed? **Irrigation circles are approximately 16 to 20 feet tall. No other structures will be built on the property.**

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed? **None.**

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any: **None.**

11. **Light and glare**

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?
**A very minimal amount of light or glare will be created. If any glare or light were to occur, it would be at night. The circle pivot point will have a light on to indicate it is running, but would only be equivalent to a 100-watt light bulb. Alfalfa harvest usually occurs at night with a swather using driving lights, which are not very noticeable. During harvest, operations can extend beyond the normal working day.**

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views? **No.**

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal? **None known.**

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:
**None proposed or needed at this stage of development.**

12. **Recreation**

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?
**Hunting, hiking, mountain biking.**

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe. **None Known.**

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any: **None Known.**

13. **Historic and cultural preservation**

a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe. **None known.**

b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site. **No evidence has been found through TRAX system.**

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any: **None needed.**

14. **Transportation**

a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any. **Access is available to site from Rd. W NE, which is connected by the North Frontage Road of Interstate 90.**

b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop? **No.**

c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate? **None.**

d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private). **No.**

e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe**. No. Seasonal trucking of commodities to market will be the only major transportation system.**

f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur**.**
**1 to 10 during the growing season, 1 to 30 during the harvest season, and 1 to 2 during the non-growing season.**

g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:
**Vehicles will only be allowed to drive on roads to reduce any impact on existing vegetation.**

15. **Public services**

a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe. **No.**

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any. **None required.**

16. **Utilities**

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: **electricity**, natural gas, **water**, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.

b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed**. Irrigation pipe will be installed by the applicant to furnish water to the circle irrigation system throughout the project area. Electrical lines will be installed by the Grant County P.U.D. to serve the circle irrigation system with power.**

C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Completed by: Brett Tonne Date:_____
Ephrata Unit Land Manager

Reviewed by: Brent Billingsley Date:_____
Columbia Basin District Manager

Approved by: Milton D. Johnston Date:_____
Assistant Region Manager